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Correspondence.

HINTS ON CHINA PAINTING AND FIRING.

SIR: I find, in gilding over color or ground tints after first fire, that every time the fluxed gold, both burnish and matt, seems to *sink* in and be lost in the color. I see advertised by Sartorius & Co., among their Hancock's gold powders, chemically pure brown gold powder, *unfluxed*, for over-color application. Is this really pure precipitated gold, such as it comes from the solution, and before any flux is added to it? And if so, will it really adhere in the second firing to the china, when laid over colored or tinted surfaces (Lacroix's colors)? And will it adhere also to the plain china? For instance, in making a border to a vignette—the surrounding china being tinted and the ground of the vignette plain—would the unfluxed gold adhere to both surfaces if laid on in a broad band half over each? And would it require a greater heat than that for Lacroix's colors (rose heat)? (2) Can you recommend any work or treatise that will give me points on china firing? I have all circulars about patent portable kilns, but no real business-like detail of the process. Your published "Talks on Firing" are very useful, but are, after all, only hints.

F. E. M., San Francisco.

For working gold over color, unfluxed gold (chemically pure brown gold) must be used. It is applied after the color is fired and polished. The flux of the color is also sufficient for the gold. If you use prepared (fluxed) gold, you work with an excess of flux, which causes the gold to become too soft, and to sink into the color. When rubbing down gold, do not use a steel palette knife. It causes the metal to assume a dull color and spoils your work. Use a knife made of horn, ivory or bone. Hancock's unfluxed gold does, of course, not contain any flux. Use this for working gold over color. If you want to apply gold to the plain surface of the china, you may use Hancock's prepared burnish gold, which contains the necessary flux. (2) No special book has been published for instruction in firing exclusively. We doubt that the process has ever been more clearly described than in *The Art Amateur*, which gives only such information as is acquired from practical experience. But there are some things about firing which cannot be learned by any amount of tuition. Each person must learn them from his own practice.

H. T., Boston.—Mrs. Frackelton's gas kilns are easy to manipulate. Messrs. A. Sartorius & Co., 12 Barclay Street, New York, sell them, and would give you any information you may require, in addition to the printed directions which go with

them. The trouble with this kiln has been that now and then it has been found that gas has spoiled the colors. The mystery was how the gas got inside of the pot. Messrs. Sartorius & Co. finally discovered that no gas had entered the pot at all, but that the gas had been generated inside of the pot, the pot being of iron. This can be entirely avoided by giving the inside of the pot a wash of fire clay, on which powdered borax has been sprinkled.

L. I. S. F., San Francisco.—As the Dresden water-colors for china painting are apt to harden soon after opening, the easiest way to use them is to take a bit of the paint out of the pan on the point of a penknife, place it upon the palette and rub it down with a little water and the palette knife. A preparation called megilp is also used with these colors; but a drop of glycerine on the brush will do as well. To spread the colors easily on the china you may have to use a *great deal* of the paint, much more than of Lacroix's colors; even then, after a thorough drying, the work may need repainting. The colors cannot be touched over and over like those mixed with oil. The painting should be dried in an oven before retouching. Proceed in other respects as with Lacroix colors. You cannot judge of the color before firing; you had better make a test plate before attempting important work.

W. H. H., Wichita, Kas.—(1) The kiln for firing china with charcoal, described in the January number, can be obtained of Stearns Fitch & Co., Springfield, O. They have four sizes. Send to them for circular and prices. Full directions accompany each kiln. (2) A dozen well-chosen colors form a good palette in mineral paints: Silver yellow, yellow ochre, orange, brown 4 or 17, common blue, turquoise blue, carnation, carmine No. 1, apple green, green No. 7, blue green, brown green. (3) Lacroix colors are both in tubes and powders. The first are easier for the amateur to use, because they are already prepared. (4) For "illustrated catalogues of china for decorating," write to M. T. Wynne, 65 East 13th Street, or M. H. Hartmann, 120 Fourth Avenue.

N. A. R., Pueblo, Col.—If you use Lacroix colors you do not need to add flux, as they are already prepared with a sufficient quantity of it. Capucine red is almost the only color that requires additional flux. In rubbing the paint on the palette, add the drop of fat oil before the turpentine. Dry in the oven after painting, or on the side of a stove, or with a spirit lamp; if the paint is sticky after drying, you have used too much fat oil.

THE LOUIS TREIZE LADY.

IN response to several requests, we give below directions for the painting this design (published in *The Art Amateur* in March) both in oil and in water-colors: For the background, use Antwerp blue, white, yellow ochre, madder lake, a little ivory black, raw umber and burnt Sienna. The polished oak floor in the foreground is painted with raw umber, yellow ochre, white, a little ivory black, light red and a little permanent blue. In the highest lights omit raw umber, and substitute burnt Sienna in the shadows for light red. The salmon-pink satin is painted with vermilion, madder lake, yellow ochre, white and a very little ivory black for the local tone. In the shadows, add raw umber and light red, substituting burnt Sienna in the deeper accents. Paint the pale apple green plush with Schönfeldt's light zinobor green, combined with light cadmium, vermilion and a little ivory black. In the shadows add raw umber and madder lake. If the zinobor green is not available, use Antwerp blue combined with the same colors, varying the proportions to suit the tone required. The lady's complexion is fair but of an ivory tone, with a faint pink flush in her cheeks and soft reddish color in the lips. To paint this flesh, use yellow ochre, vermilion, white, madder lake, the least touch of light cadmium, a very little ivory black, cobalt and raw umber. In the shadows add burnt Sienna. The dark brown hair is painted with bone brown and yellow ochre, adding ivory black and burnt Sienna in the deeper touches. For the gold necklace around her throat, use yellow ochre, raw umber, white, madder lake, and a little ivory black, adding burnt Sienna in the small dark touches. In painting this design, use flat bristle-brushes of medium and small sizes for general painting. Small flat-pointed sables, Nos. 5 and 8, are used in the details and finishing touches.

The water-colors needed for the background are Antwerp blue, yellow ochre, raw umber, madder lake and lamp-black. Use plenty of water in washing in the general tones, and omit all white paint from the transparent washes.

For the salmon pink dress, use vermilion, rose madder, yellow ochre, and a little lamp-black, adding light red and raw umber in the shadows. Paint the apple green dress with light zinobor green qualified by rose madder, a little cadmium and lamp-black; add

raw umber in the shadows. For the flesh, use yellow ochre, vermilion, rose madder, a little cobalt and lamp-black, adding raw umber and burnt Sienna in the shadows, and omitting vermilion. For the hair, use sepia and burnt Sienna, with a touch of cobalt in the shadows and half tints. The polished oak floor is painted with raw umber, yellow ochre, lamp-black, cobalt and burnt Sienna.

THE HOBBY OF "BOOK ILLUSTRATING."

H. J. T., Chicago.—"Book illustrating," as the term is used by collectors, means gathering portraits of the persons, and views of the places mentioned in any given book, and having the book handsomely rebound, with each portrait and view placed opposite the page where it is mentioned. This pastime is fascinating and pleasurable, for pleasure consists not so much in the acquisition of a desired object as in the pursuit of it, and book illustrating is a constant pursuit of coveted prints. It is, moreover, instructive, because the collector makes himself acquainted with the history of the persons mentioned in the book he is illustrating, which leads him to read other books, and in time he becomes thoroughly conversant with the history of the period of which his book treats. The hobby is closely allied to "bibliomania," and is generally indulged in by those having fine libraries.

A TRICK OF PICTURE CLEANERS.

S. S., Boston.—There is a trick in the preparation of most of the half-restored paintings which are exposed in the store windows simply to catch the unwary. The mode of procedure is to get a picture in rather good condition and lay a straight edge up the centre, then take a brush, called a sash tool, with a little raw umber or some dirty color, *soil* half the picture and then soften with a badger brush to make the discoloring look uniform. Methylated spirits and also hartshorn are used for cleaning oil paintings; but they must be used by practised hands. A novice should not attempt such delicate work.

SUNDRY QUERIES ANSWERED.

S. T., Boston.—We have heard of "sealing-wax painting," but hardly consider it deserving the attention of a serious student of art. Sealing-wax of different colors is dissolved in spirits of wine and used as ordinary oil or water-colors are, only the medium employed is spirits of wine instead of megilp or water. The process is fully described in the April number of Godey's Lady's Book.

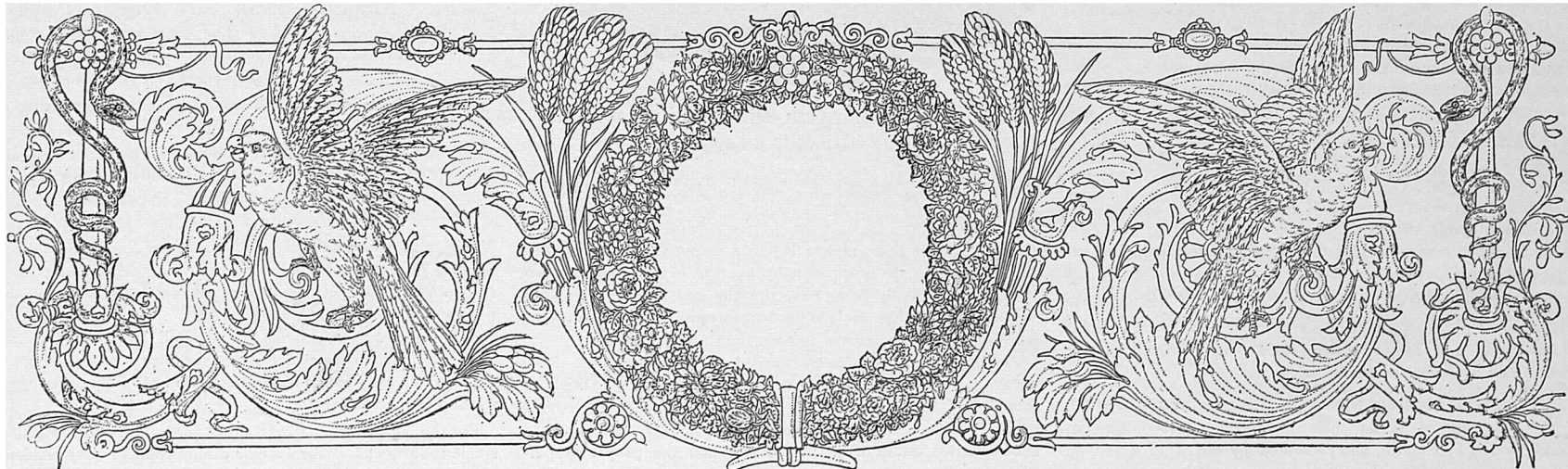
H. P., Syracuse.—"Low Tide at Crane Island, Gulf of St. Lawrence," is the title of the original water-color by H. W. Ranger, from which the reproduction was made that appeared in the January number of *The Art Amateur*.

MRS. NYE, Attleboro, Mass., writes: "I notice that in speaking of solar prints you say, 'We have never heard of any on canvas, and doubt that they could be so made.' I enclose a circular of W. H. Pierce & Co., solar printers, 352 Washington Street, Boston, who furnish photographic enlargements on canvas for oil painting."

S. P., Cleveland.—Any decoration tends to bring the ceiling down to the eye; the lighter therefore the tints are kept in accordance with the general color of the room itself, the more pleasing, though less obtrusive, will be the effect.

J. M. B., Indianapolis, referring to the inquiry for names of books and magazines which would tell something of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, writes: "I can mention the 'Recollections of D. G. Rossetti,' by Hall Caine, and 'Dante Gabriel Rossetti,' by W. Sharp; also a preface to an edition of Rossetti's poems by his brother, William M. Besides the Magazine of Art articles there are three important papers by H. Hunt in *The Contemporary Review* for 1886, and *The Connoisseur* of Philadelphia has an article translated from the French in its March, 1888, number."

THE Tiffany Glass Co. have just completed for Mr. Potter Palmer, of Chicago, a large and handsome stained-glass window intended for the staircase landing of his new house. The composition shows a number of mediæval knights in steel-blue glass mounted on brown glass horses and waving banners of crimson and yellow. This is framed in by a broad band ornamented with shields, and represents the famous "Field of the Cloth of Gold," which seems to be a favorite subject with Mr. Tiffany. The window is fourteen by seven feet, and the figures are about one fourth life size.



TO COPY A BUST IN CLAY.

S. P., Troy, N.Y.—Place the bust you intend to copy upon a stand, or column, or two boxes, so as to be of the same height as that you have commenced in the clay. Block in the head and the neck, rounding the clay off as you proceed. Do not form the whole of the shoulders the first day. Attach only some three or four inches on each side. This is in order that the weight of the clay may not cause it to drop or settle down. In the course of the second and third days the rest may be added gradually. The work must be gone over carefully, and the features paid as much attention to as possible.

MODELLING A BUST FROM LIFE.

TYRO, Boston.—The light of your studio should be some five or six feet from the ground at least. The window should be darkened in the lower part; the light will thus fall at an angle on the stand and the work it supports and the person whose bust is about to be modelled. The subject should stand as much as possible, but a chair may be conveniently placed near so that he may not become too fatigued, but sit down at intervals.

Have all your tools and clay near to you, and make, if possible, a slight sketch in chalk or pencil, or a small rough model-sketch in clay of your subject, in that position which seems to you the best for your intended bust. This will probably be enough for the first sitting. Between this and the next prepare your larger model in the clay, with the head and neck blocked in in the position indicated by your small sketch-model or crayon drawing.

For the second sitting, having placed your subject as before, begin by modelling in the face, taking heed that it is sufficiently in advance of the neck. You can easily advance the neck, if it requires it, afterward to its proper position, while, if the face is kept too far back, the cross-piece of the wooden stand that should be just across the shoulders, buried in the clay, will come forward, and, besides being in the way of the work, look very unsightly. Now model in, to a certain degree, the nose, the brows and the chin; next the cheeks. Next model the eyes and mouth somewhat roughly. Indicate the ears, and, generally, the shape of the head. See also that you have given sufficient action in the turn of the head and the neck, and model in at this time some four or five inches on each side of the neck for the shoulders to be carried out and completed in due course. This will probably be enough for the second sitting. In the interval between this and

the third sitting you can block in more of the shoulders and begin to arrange roughly such drapery as you may have decided to give the bust, either as ancient or modern costume. From your small sketch-model roughly begin the hair and whiskers or mustache, if any.

For the third sitting, go on now with the modelling, correcting with a fresh eye any of the principal points that require addition or taking away from. Pay great attention to the forehead, the chin, and the mouth. The eyes will next claim your consideration. By this time the head should have a fair amount of resemblance. See that the ears are in their proper position, and advance them a stage also, and you will probably have done sufficient for the time.

Now strengthen the force of your expression in the brows (if a male subject), also slightly the chin, unless that should be a very prominent point, and by adding to the hair in its principal lines you will bring out, as it were, the features. Go on to finish the face, ears and neck, with the hair, working in the intervals at the drapery. The reason of this is that you will by these means bring all your work forward together, leaving only the concluding touches and corrections that may appear necessary from time to time for the next and the final sitting.

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